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## Why you need a new best friend.

When thinking of ways to reduce stress in life, techniques like meditation and yoga come to mind. Great techniques, but getting a new best friend can also have many stress relieving and health benefits. In fact, for nearly 25 years, research has shown that living with pets provides certain health benefits.

### **Allergy Fighters**

A growing number of studies have suggested that kids growing up in a home with "furred animals" -- whether it's a pet cat or dog, or on a farm -- will have less risk of allergies and asthma.

### **Pets Control Blood Pressure Better Than Drugs**

While ACE inhibiting drugs can generally reduce blood pressure, they aren't as effective on controlling spikes in blood pressure due to stress and tension.

### **Date Magnets and Loneliness Reducers**

Dogs are great for making love connections. Pets can offer love and companionship, keep secrets and are excellent snugglers.

### **Dogs for the Aged**

Studies have shown that Alzheimer's patients have fewer anxious outbursts if there is an animal in the home.

Walking a dog or just caring for a pet -- for elderly people who are able -- can provide exercise and companionship.

### **Pets Can Reduce Stress—Sometimes More Than People**

people actually experienced less stress when their pets were with them than when a supportive friend or even their spouse was present!

### **Good for the Heart**

Heart attack patients who have pets survive longer than those without, according to several studies. Male pet owners have less sign of heart disease -- lower triglyceride and cholesterol levels - - than non-owners.